GSA NATIONAL FURNITURE CENTER

GUIDE TO BUYING SYSTEMS FURNITURE

A Quality Partnership Product

≡GSA
Federal Supply Service

GUIDE TO BUYING FURNITURE SYSTEMS
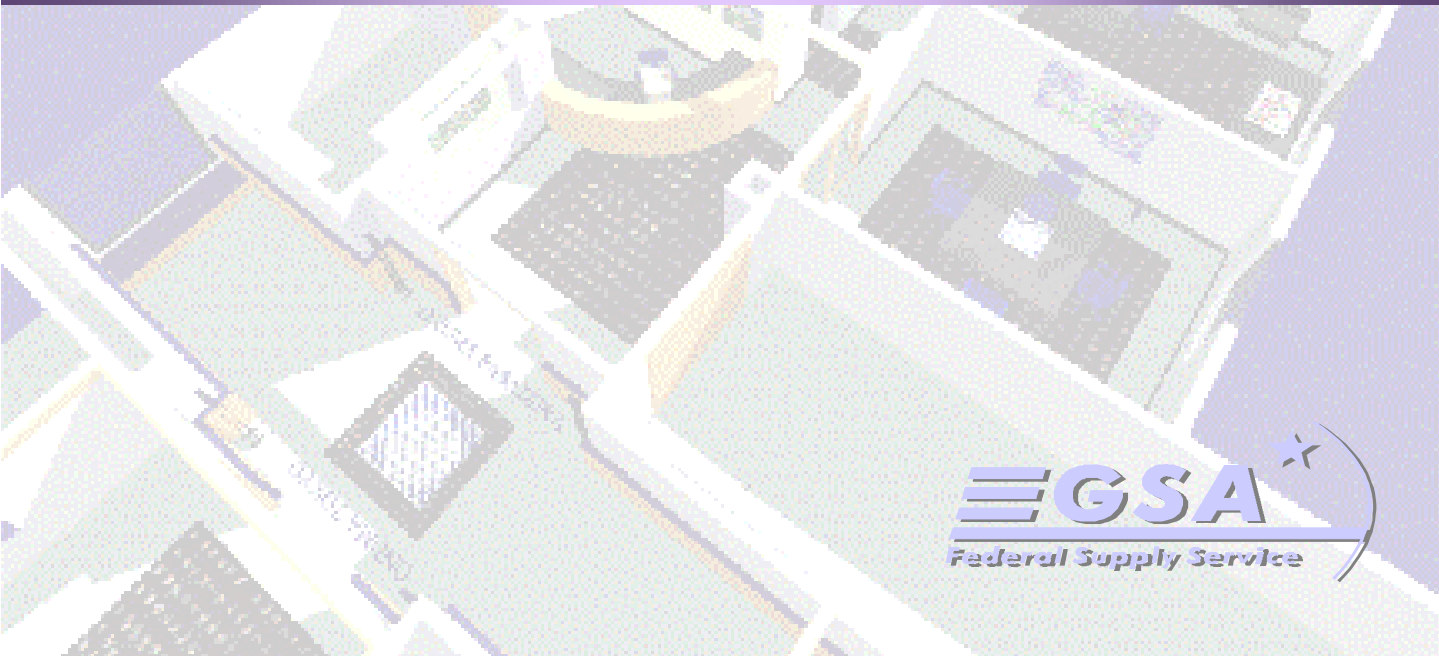
INTRODUCTION

You've been designated as the manager of your agency's furniture project. You and your project team can actually help improve the effectiveness of your agency by providing a quality work environment.

This document will guide you through the major phases of a systems project. By following the outlined steps, you can help ensure that your furniture will be delivered and installed on time -- and will provide the **best value** for your investment. Please read through this guide completely, before beginning your project.

STEP I. PRE-PLANNING

Identify the size of your project, including the number of systems workstations and enclosed offices required. You need to contact one of the following to assist you in developing your project requirements if the project exceeds approximately 50 people or is very complex.

- Your in-house architectural or space planning branch
- Your agency's procurement office
- Your regional GSA Public Buildings Service office (planning fee involved)
- The General Services Administration's National Furniture Center (NFC)
  Phone: 703.305.7020
  Fax: 703.305.7183
  E-Mail: Juanita.Blassingame@gsa.gov
- A local architectural firm with space planning expertise (planning fee involved)

(Note: If your project involves fewer than 50 workstations, you still have the option of hiring a professional architectural firm. Also, the NFC is always available to answer project or contracting questions.)

Your agency will be responsible for following all local codes as well as all local, agency and federal requirements and regulations. For assistance with rules governing your project or furniture purchase, contact either your procurement office or the NFC.

GSA Federal Supply Schedules

The National Furniture Center has negotiated with all the major systems furniture manufacturers to offer their products to the federal government at "best customer prices". These Federal Supply Contracts often offer the full range of products produced by the manufacturer. GSA has already synopsized the procurement and determined the prices to be fair and reasonable. GSA Federal Supply Schedules also meet the requirements of competition under the Competition in Contracting Act (CICA) and FAR 6.102(d)(3). It is recommended that you request the GSA contract catalog from any manufacturer you are considering as the contracts offer an excellent value for the government buyer. Your procurement office should also be able to provide a number of manufacturers' government contract catalogs and you can request them through the National Furniture Center (see above).

Using the Schedules can save time and money, and purchases may be based on "best value." This means that other factors besides price may be considered such as delivery, product warranties, special features, installation and maintenance training, past performance, environmental issues, etc. The NFC can combine all your requirements for further price reductions and cut red tape.

PLEASE NOTE:
Design and layout services are also offered under the GSA Furniture Systems Contracts on an hourly basis. **Vendors must not be asked to provide these services on a free or speculative basis.** You can order design and layout services early in the process or when you are ready to order the furniture.

STEP II. ORGANIZING YOUR PROJECT

Following these steps will help your project get off on the right track.

A. Organize your project team.
B. Gather blueprints for spaces to be occupied and information pertinent to delivery and installation of your furnishings (i.e. loading dock, elevators, schedule, etc.).
C. Identify your project deadlines.
D. Identify your agency's approval authority; without timely approvals a project can get hopelessly bogged down and costly.
E. Determine that sufficient funds are allocated for this project in the current fiscal year. Note that leasing the furniture (available as an option under GSA schedules) may be one way you can obtain the products needed without having to spend scarce acquisition funds.

STEP III. DEFINING PROJECT REQUIREMENTS

As project manager, it will be your responsibility to provide the proper environment in support of all the different work functions. The first task will be to identify exactly what are those functions. Use the following task categories as a general guide:

Task Categories:
- Administrative/Support
- Technical/Professional
- Supervisor/Mid-level Manager
- Director/Executive
- Teams
- Clerical/Data entry

A. **Gathering Data**

1. Before proceeding, you need to check if your agency has established workspace standards or minimum technical standards.

2. If no standard exists, use your organizational chart and personnel list to identify all the different kinds of tasks within your organization (clerical, administrative, supervisory, professional, engineering, managerial, etc.)

3. After making a list of all functional categories, request a representative(s) from each of the groups.

4. Conduct a brief interview with each group representative and establish work patterns for that group.

5. The next task is to identify the actual kinds and amounts of workspace for each task performed. Some factors to consider:

Individual workstations
- Amount of filing space for active files (in linear feet)
- Numbers of reference books (in linear feet of bookcase shelving)
- Space for computer(s) and peripherals (this can be a corner or straight worksurface)
    - Printers/scanners/digitizers/fax machines/other specialized equipment
    - Requirements for more that one computer system within a workstation
    - Shared computer or printer between two workstations
- Worksurface space for reviewing, writing or reading (a 4-6 feet wide by 24-30 inch deep size is generally sufficient)
- Space for binders for active projects (in linear feet)
- Drafting board/other specialized furnishings (identify size)

- Does the person act as a receptionist (requiring a specialized work counter)
- Guest seating
- Shared workspace for teaming
- Security - for documents, objects, entire workspace
- Specialized requirements for physically challenged employees
- Adjacency requirement for other activities or personnel
- Workstations for temporary staff, students, contractors

6. <u>Support Space</u>
   In the interviews, also review requirements for shared support spaces (i.e. fax machines, copiers, centralized files, supplies, printers, reception/waiting areas as well as coffee stations, coat racks, supply cabinets, etc.). It is best to gather this information as part of these initial interviews. Adjacency requirements should also be noted for these spaces.

7. <u>Specialized Spaces and Requirements</u>
   Identify points of contact for specific requirements (security, training facilities, telecommunications, specialized equipment, etc.). Conduct interviews and analyze your requirements for storage, meeting/conference, break, training and technical support rooms. Determine adjacency requirements for the areas identified. This information will also be required by the selected vendor in order to lay out your final space.

B. **Selecting Workstation Typicals.**
   Workstation requirements and designs are developed or selected based upon the information gathered in the interviews for each of the job functions identified. Since many functions require similar working conditions, a single workstation design may be suitable, needing only minor variations in workstation design, for several types of jobs. The single workstation is considered to be representative or "typical" of the workstation required for those functions.

   A series of generic typical workstations has been included in this guide. You may find one or more of these suitable for your requirements or you may choose to develop your own using these as a guide. Typical workstations for support areas are not included but may be developed along similar lines. Typicals can also be developed later for support areas by the vendor selected for your project.

   Because of the variations in products offered by different manufacturers, it would be nearly impossible for you to define all the pieces and parts (components) needed for each workstation typical. The vendor selected to do the project will convert and individually customize your generic typicals using their components.

   Use the information gathered in Step III A to select the typicals from the back of this guide that most closely reflect your requirements. Keep the following tips in mind.

1. Requirements should be kept as general as possible. Specific sizes of panels, storage units or worksurfaces should be specified only if they are critical to function. Approximate requirements for panel heights should be identified. Any special electrical, telecommunications, privacy or security requirements must be specifically identified.

2. When there are several workstations that are basically variations of one general size, select just one as your typical. Variations can be made in the internal components to accommodate various functions; the fewer the number of different typicals, the better. Why fewer?

   - Fewer parts to inventory
   - If your organization changes, you can move people around instead of reconfiguring workstations.
   - If you do need to reconfigure the workstations, you have standardized parts and more flexibility without having to buy additional new parts.
   - The number of typicals affects the cost of design and installtion.

   NOTE: The way the workspaces are laid out on your floor plan will be customized for your specific needs once the delivery order has been placed. Additional components, such as power feeds, will be required for final installation.

C. **Quantities**
   Next, identify the quantity required for each of the selected typical workstations.

STEP IV. PLACING A DELIVERY ORDER

Turn over all the information gathered to one of the following organizations to place a delivery order from the GSA Federal Supply Schedules.

- NFC (see Step 1)
- Your agency's procurement office

DO's and DON'Ts

DON'T request that vendors provide product mock-ups for projects under the Maximum Order. Contracts contain a clause prohibiting this.

DON'T require vendors to provide complete layouts as a condition for offering on an acquisition. Use typical, generic workstations as a basis for request for pricing. Do not request that vendors provide complete and free design services as a condition for consideration on any size order.

DON'T require or expect a vendor to store your project without storage charges once it has been produced and delivery cannot be accepted. There will be an additional charge for this service and it must be negotiated on a case-by-case basis. If storage exceeds 30 days, GSA recommends partial payment to the contractor for up to 80% of the value of the stored product. The remaining 20% would be paid upon delivery of product in accordance with the schedule payments clause. The need for vendor-provided storage space should be avoided if possible.

DO cite the GSA contract number on all orders issued.

DON'T establish unrealistic delivery dates for your project. Normal lead times (from the date that you begin work on the acquisition to the date installation begins) are approximately nine months. If the project timeline is altered due to delays in design approval, renovation schedules, etc., delivery dates should be renegotiated

DO contact the National Furniture Center, Furniture Systems Management Division for assistance in developing a procurement document for furniture systems.

DON'T require vendors to connect stations to the building power source. This function is outside the scope of the schedule.

DON'T require vendors to supply test data that was required for basic contract award (e.g., fire, smoke, acoustic).

DO submit procurement documents to the schedule contracts, not to dealers.

DO consider leasing.

SYMBOLS

⊖ Wall mounted duplex outlet

⊕ Wall mounted quadraplex outlet
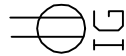
⊖IG Wall mounted duplex outlet w/ isolated ground

J Wall mounted base feed

⊖D Wall mounted dedicated outlet

⊖GFID Wall mounted GFI duplex outlet

△ Wall mounted telephone outlet

△C Wall mounted data outlet

⊚ Floor mounted duplex outlet

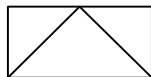⊕ Floor mounted quadraplex outlet

⊚IG Floor mounted duplex outlet w/ isolated ground

⊚D Floor mounted dedicated outlet
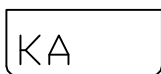
⊙ Floor mounted telephone outlet

⊙C Floor mounted data outlet

▱ Flipper door cabinet

BBF Pedestal w/drawers   BBF = Box/Box/File
                                FF = File/File

PD Pencil drawer

KA Keyboard arm

LAT Lateral file

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		SCALE: 1/4"=1'0"	
	Date: 04-03-1998		
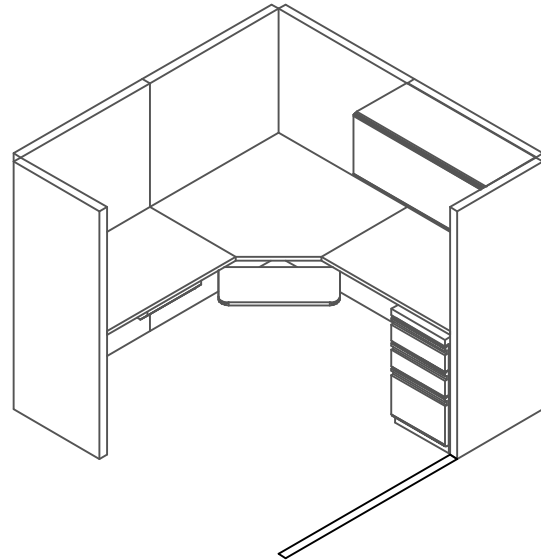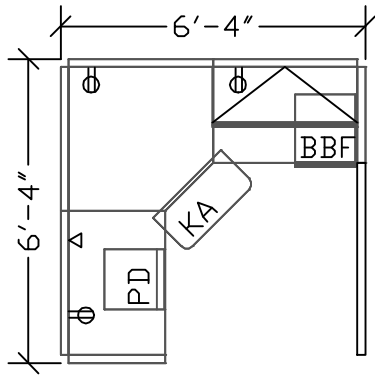
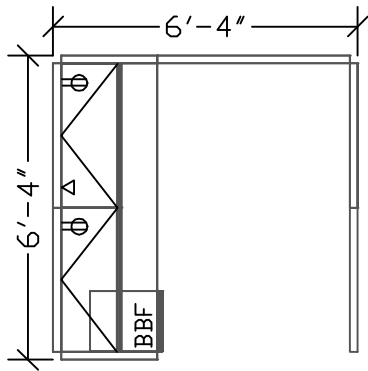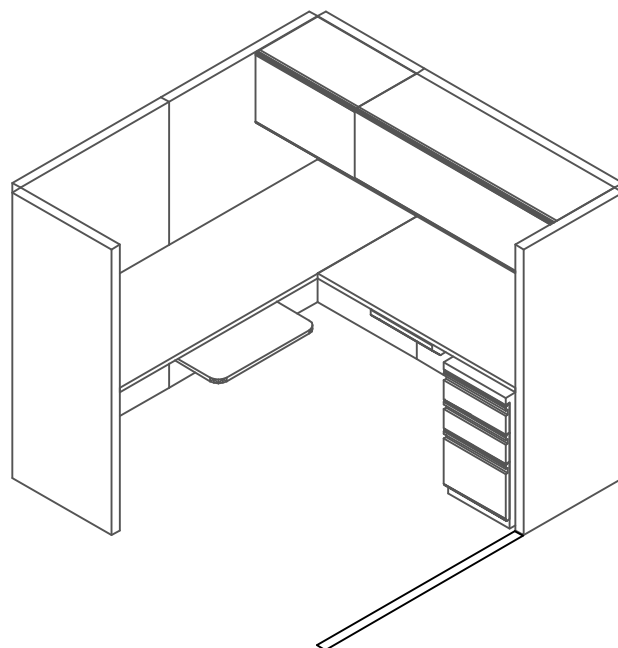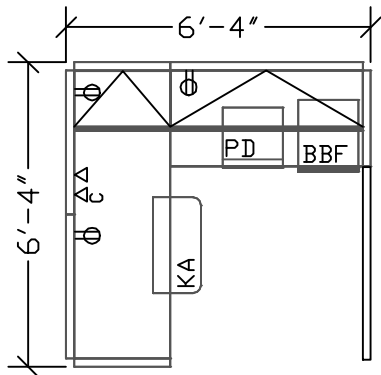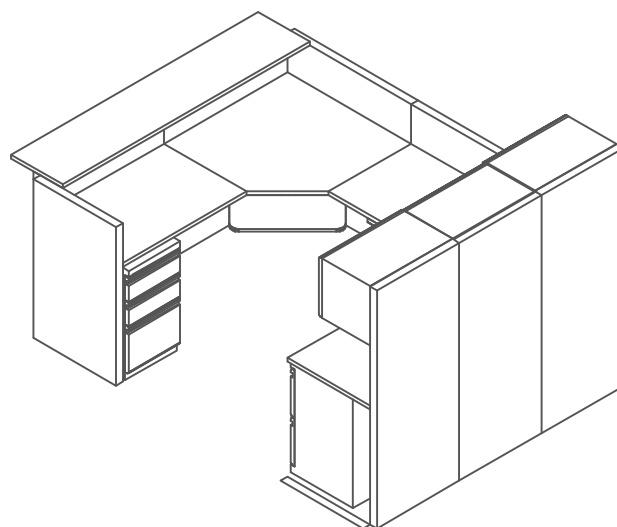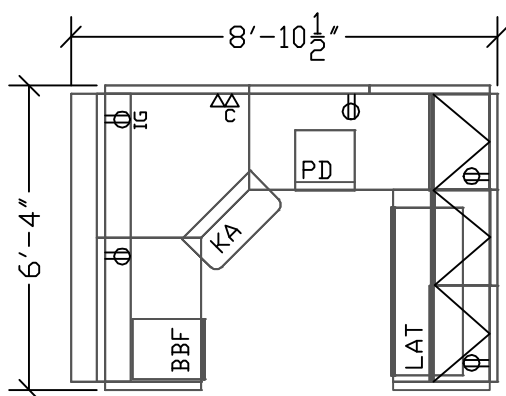| Component	Qty	Size
Panels	20 lin. ft.	60" high
Worksurface	2	24" x 36"
Worksurface	1	36" corner
Keyboard arm	1	
Pencil drawer	1	
Pedestal, mobile	1	Box/Box/File
Cabinet	1	36"

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Workstation 1
Clerical/Intern

SQ. FT. 40
SCALE: 1/4"=1'0"

Date: 04-03-1998

6'-4"

6'-4"

KA

PD

c
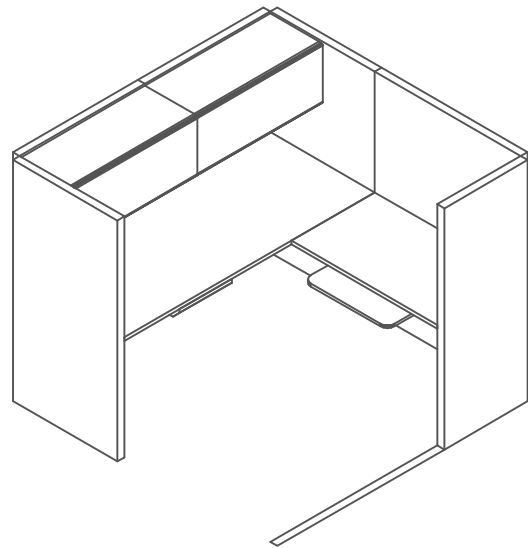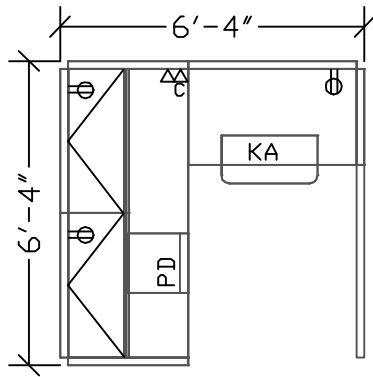
Component	Qty	Size
Panels	20.5 lin. ft	60" high
Worksurface	1	30" x 72"
Worksurface	1	24" x 42"
Keyboard arm	1	
Pencil Drawer	1	
Cabinet	2	36"

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Workstation 2
Clerical/Intern

SQ. FT. 40

SCALE: 1/4"=1'0"

Date: 04-03-1998

6'-4"

6'-4"

BBF
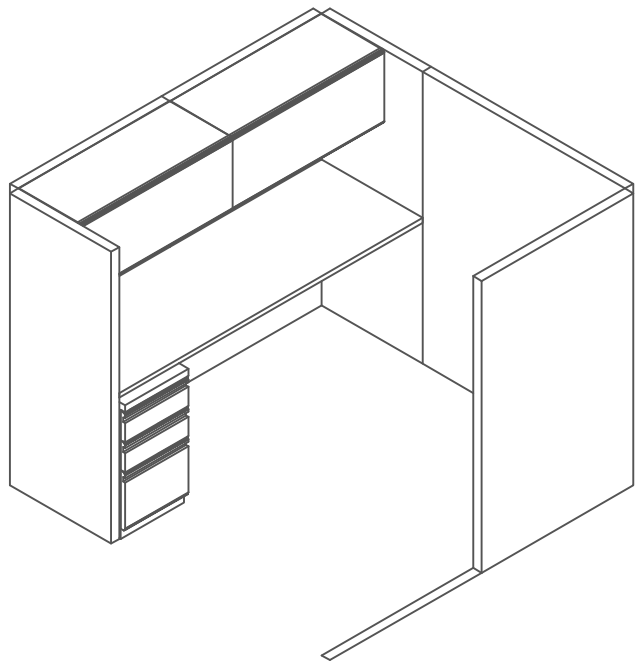
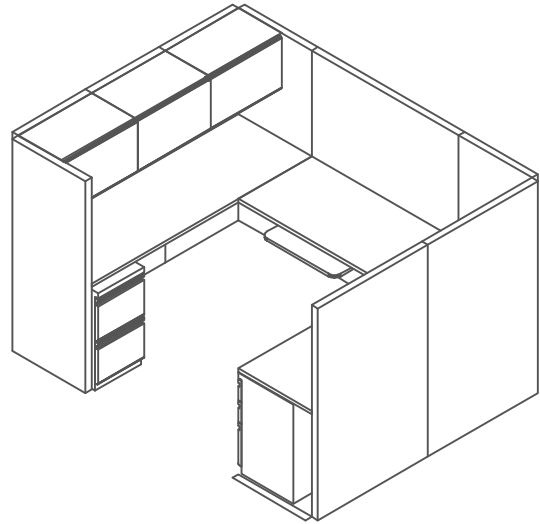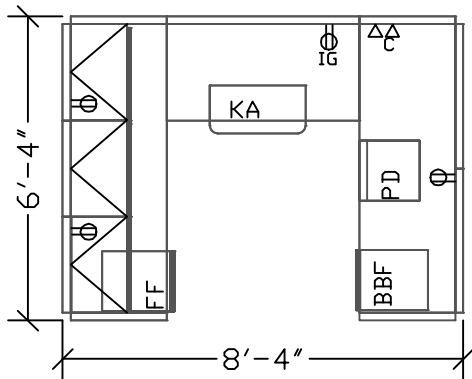| Component	Qty	Size
Panels	20 lin.ft.	60" high
Worksurface	1	24" x 72"
Cabinet	2	36"
Pedestal	1	Box/Box/File

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Workstation 3
Clerical

SQ. FT. 40

SCALE: 1/4"=1'0"

Date: 04-03-1998

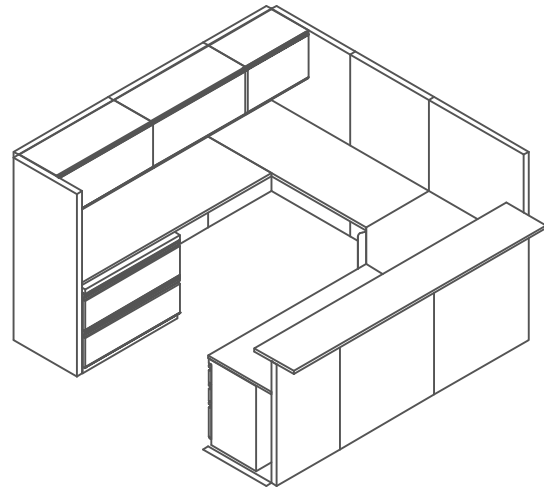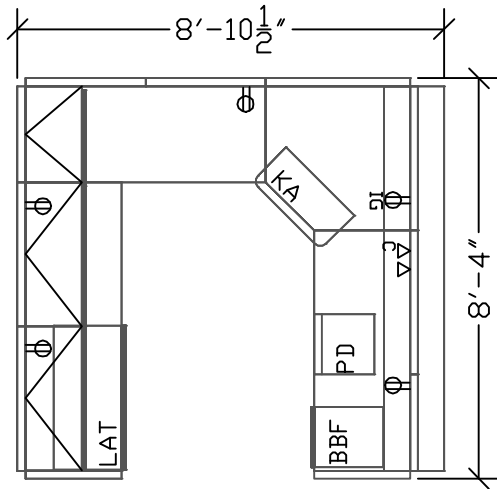| Component	Qty	Size
Panels	20 lin.ft.	60" high
Worksurface	1	24" x 72"
Worksurface	1	24" x 48"
Keyboard arm	1	
Pencil drawer	1	
Cabinet	1	24"
Cabinet	1	48"
Pedestal, mobile	1	Box/Box/File

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Workstation 4
Clerical

SQ. FT. 40

SCALE: 1/4"=1'0"

Date: 04-03-1998

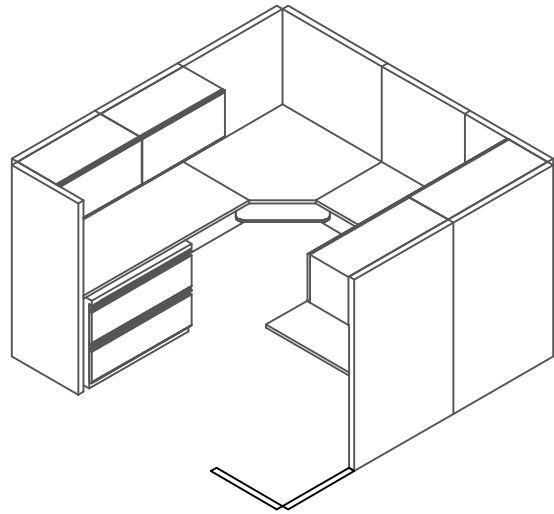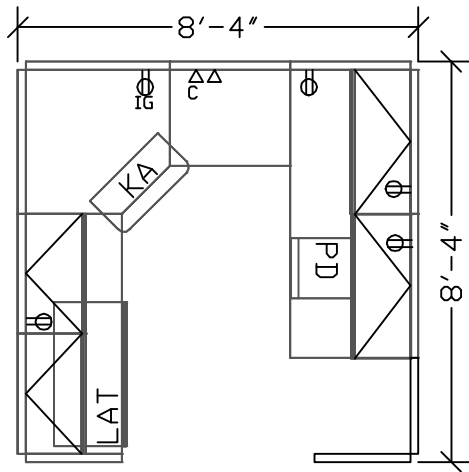| Component	Qty	Size
Panels	24 lin.ft.	64-68" high
Worksurface	1	24" x 36"
Worksurface	1	24" x 60"
Worksurface	1	24" x 48"
Worksurface	1	36" corner
Counter	1	72"
Keyboard arm	1	
Pencil drawer	1	
Cabinet	3	24"
Pedestal	1	Box/Box/File
Lateral file	1	42" 2-drawer

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Workstation 6
Secretarial

SQ. FT. 56

SCALE: 1/4"=1'0"

Date: 04-03-1998

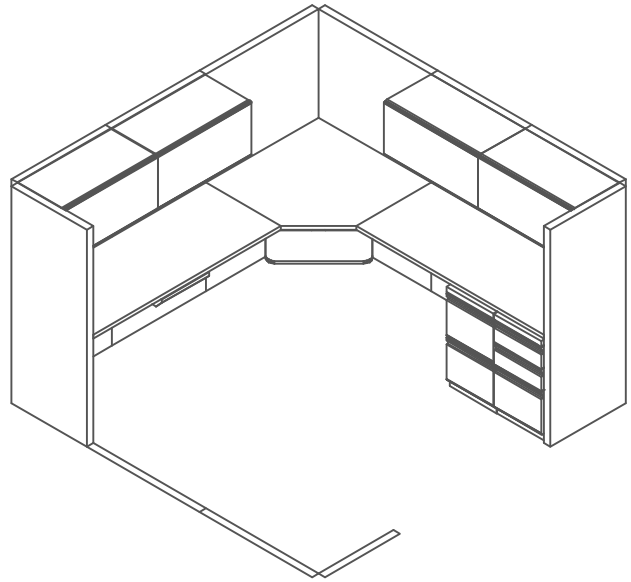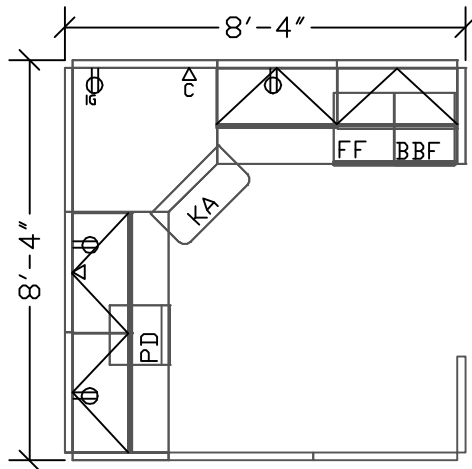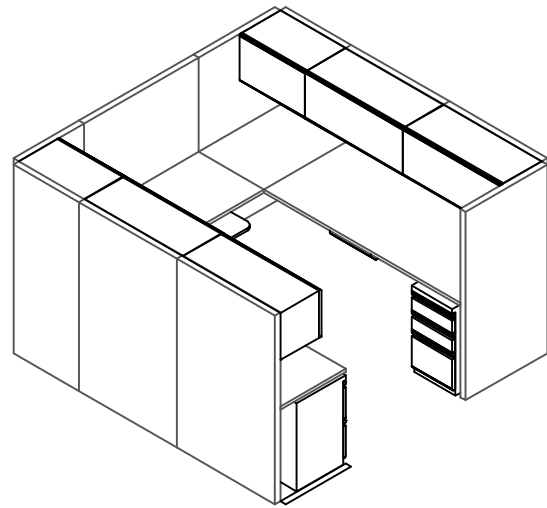| Component	Qty	Size
Panels	24 lin.ft.	64-68" high
Worksurface	2	24" x 72"
Worksurface	1	24" x 48"
Keyboard arm	1	
Pencil drawer	1	
Cabinet	3	24"
Pedestal	1	Box/Box/File
Pedestal	1	File/File

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Workstation 7
Professional

SQ. FT. 52

SCALE: 1/4"=1'0"

Date: 04-03-1998

Diagram labels (plan view): 8'-10½", 8'-4", KA, G, C, PD, BBF, LAT

Components	Qty		Size
Panels	28	lin. ft	64-68" high
Worksurface	2		24" x 60"
Worksurface	1		24" x 72"
Worksurface	1		36" corner
Counter	1		96"
Keyboard arm	1		
Pencil drawer	1		
Cabinet	1		24"
Cabinet	2		36"
Pedestal, mobile	1		Box/Box/File
Lateral file	1		36" 2-drawer

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Workstation 8
Secretarial

SQ. FT. 74

SCALE: 1/4"=1'0"

Date: 04-03-1998

8'-4"

8'-4"

KA

PD

LAT

IG

C

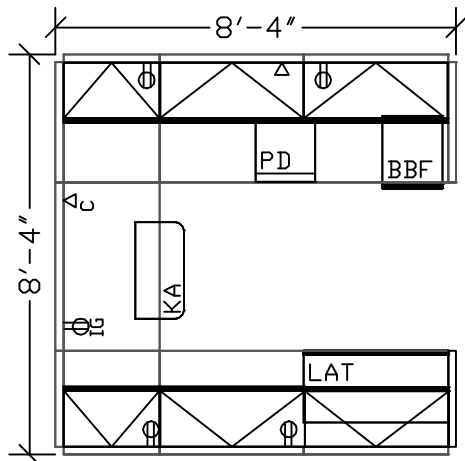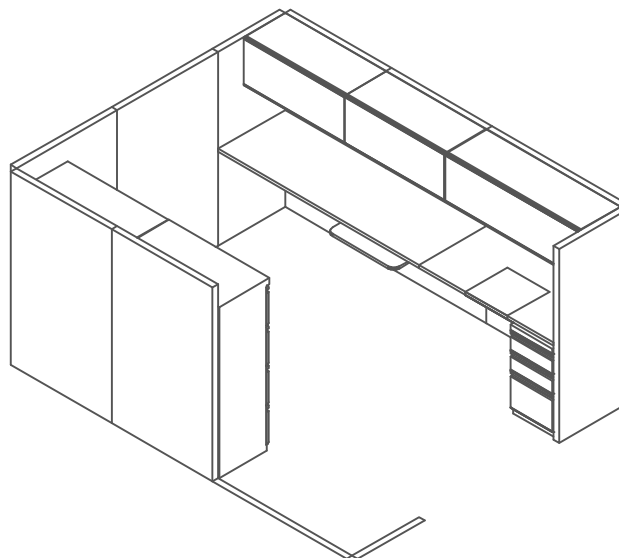| Component	Qty	Size
Panels	28 lin.ft.	64-68" high
Worksurface	1	24" x 72"
Worksurface	1	24" x 36"
Worksurface	1	24" x 60"
Worksurface	1	36" Corner
Keyboard arm	1	
Pencil Drawer	1	
Cabinet	2	30"
Cabinet	2	36"
Lateral file	1	36" 2-drawer

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Workstation 9
Professional

SQ. FT. 69

SCALE: 1/4"=1'0"

Date: 04-03-1998

8'-4"

8'-4"

G
C
FF   BBF
KA
PD

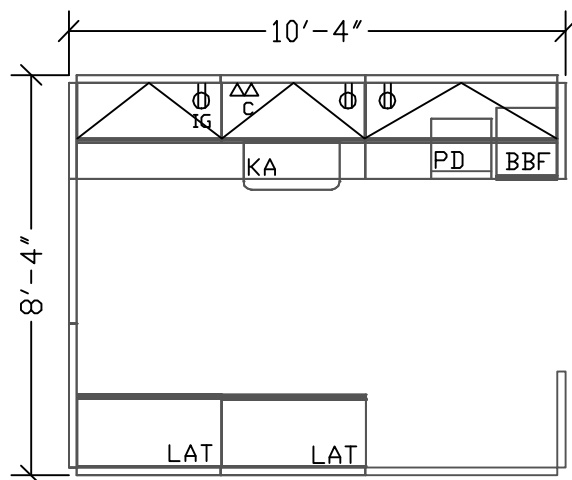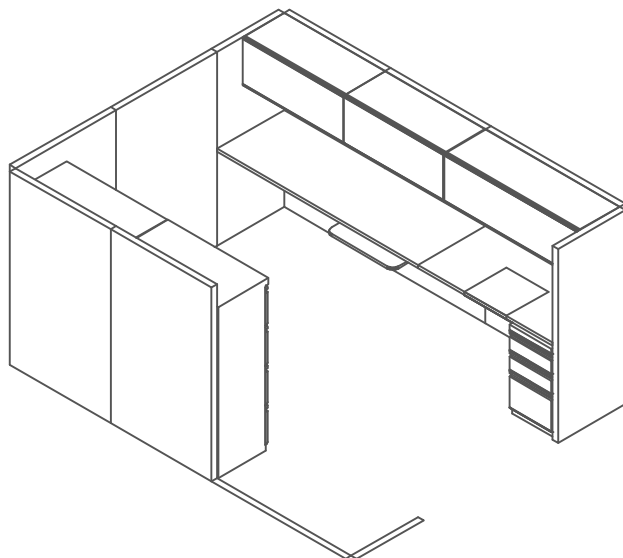| Component	Qty	Size
Panels	28 lin.ft.	64-68" high
Worksurface	2	24" x 60"
Worksurface	1	36" corner
Keyboard arm	1	
Pencil drawer	1	
Cabinet	4	30"
Pedestal	1	Box/Box/File
Pedestal	1	File/File

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Workstation 10
Professional

SQ. FT. 69

SCALE: 1/4"=1'0"

Date: 04-03-1998

Component	Qty	Size
Panel	28 lin.ft.	64-68" high
Worksurface	2	24" x 72"
Worksurface	1	30" x 72"
Worksurface	1	24" x 24"
Keyboard	1	
Pencil drawer	1	
Pedestal	1	Box/Box/File
Cabinet	4	36"
Cabinet	2	24"
Lateral file	1	36", 2 drawer

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Workstation 11
Professional/
Analytical

SQ. FT. 69

SCALE: 1/4"=1'0"

Date: 04-03-1998

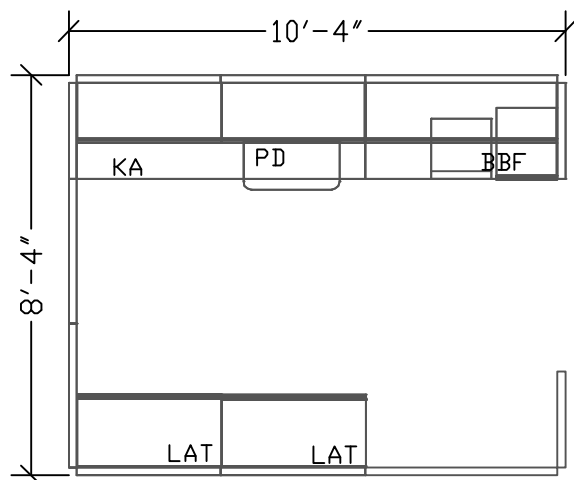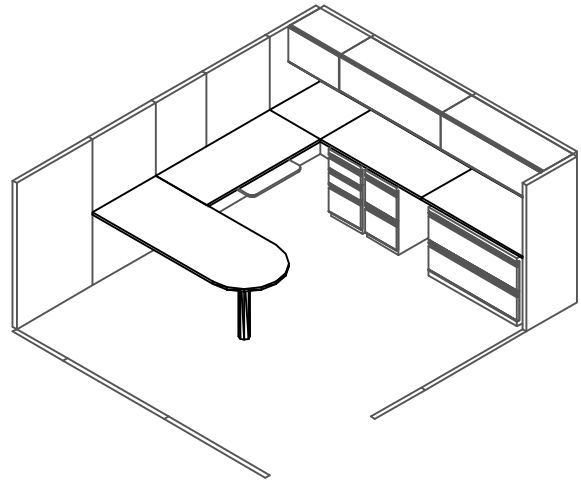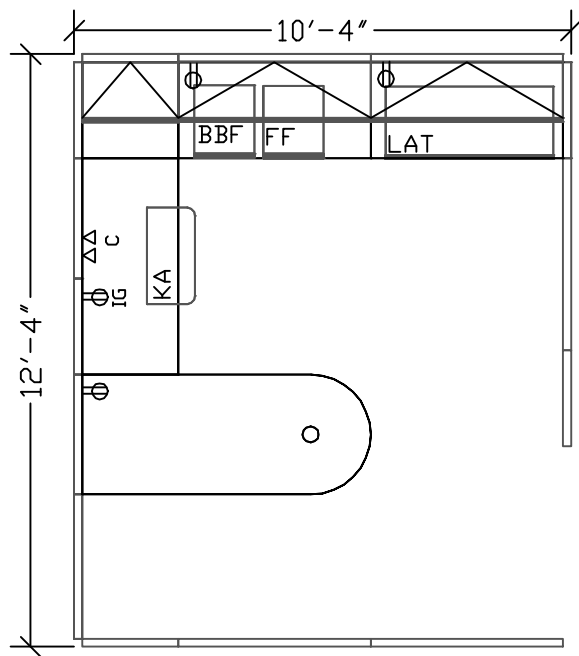| Component	Qty	Size
Panels	32 lin.ft.	64-68" high
Worksurface	1	24" x 72"
Worksurface	1	24" x 48"
Keyboard	1	
Pencil drawer	1	
Pedestal	1	Box/Box/File
Cabinet	2	36"
Cabinet	1	48"
Lateral file	2	36", 5 drawer

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Workstation 12
Professional

SQ. FT. 86

SCALE: 1/4"=1'0"

Date: 04-03-1998

10'-4"

8'-4"

KA   PD   BBF

LAT   LAT

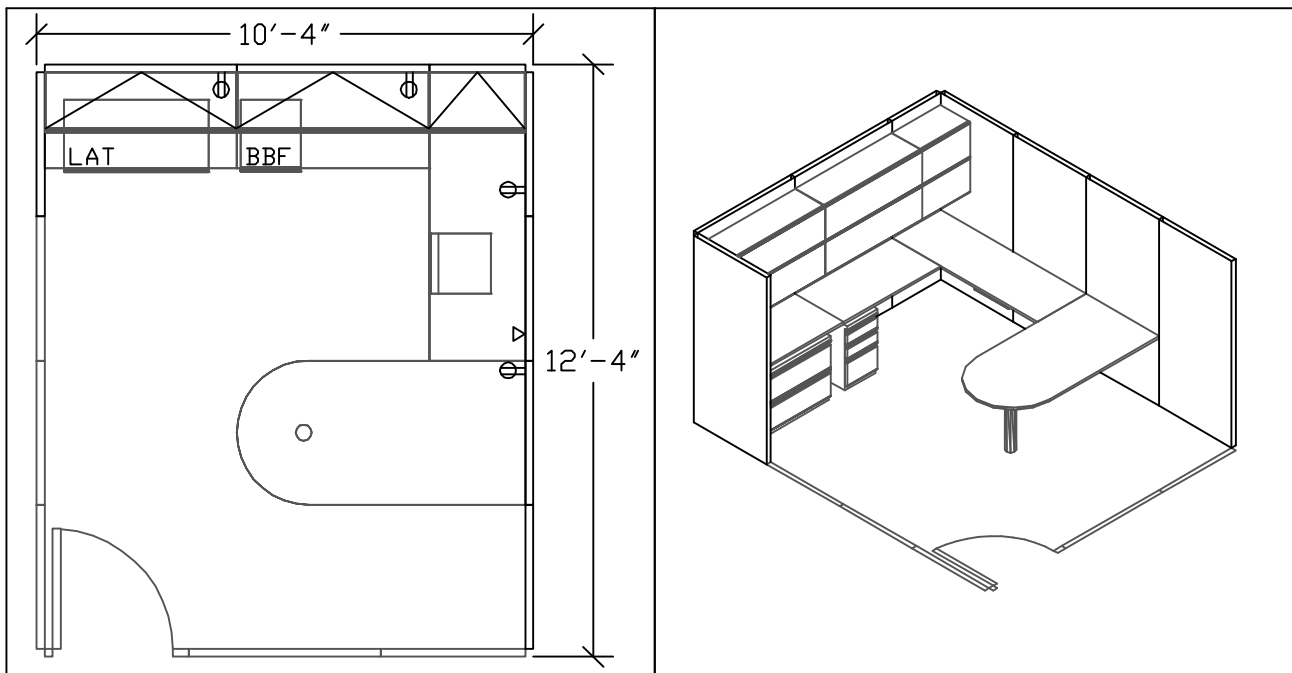| Component	Qty	Size
Panels	32 lin.ft.	64-68" high
Worksurface	1	24" x 72"
Worksurface	1	24" x 48"
Keyboard	1	
Pencil drawer	1	
Pedestal	1	Box/Box/File
Cabinet	2	36"
Cabinet	1	48"
Lateral file	2	36" 5-drawer

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Workstation 13
Professional

SQ. FT. 86

SCALE: 1/4"=1'0"

Date: 04-03-1998

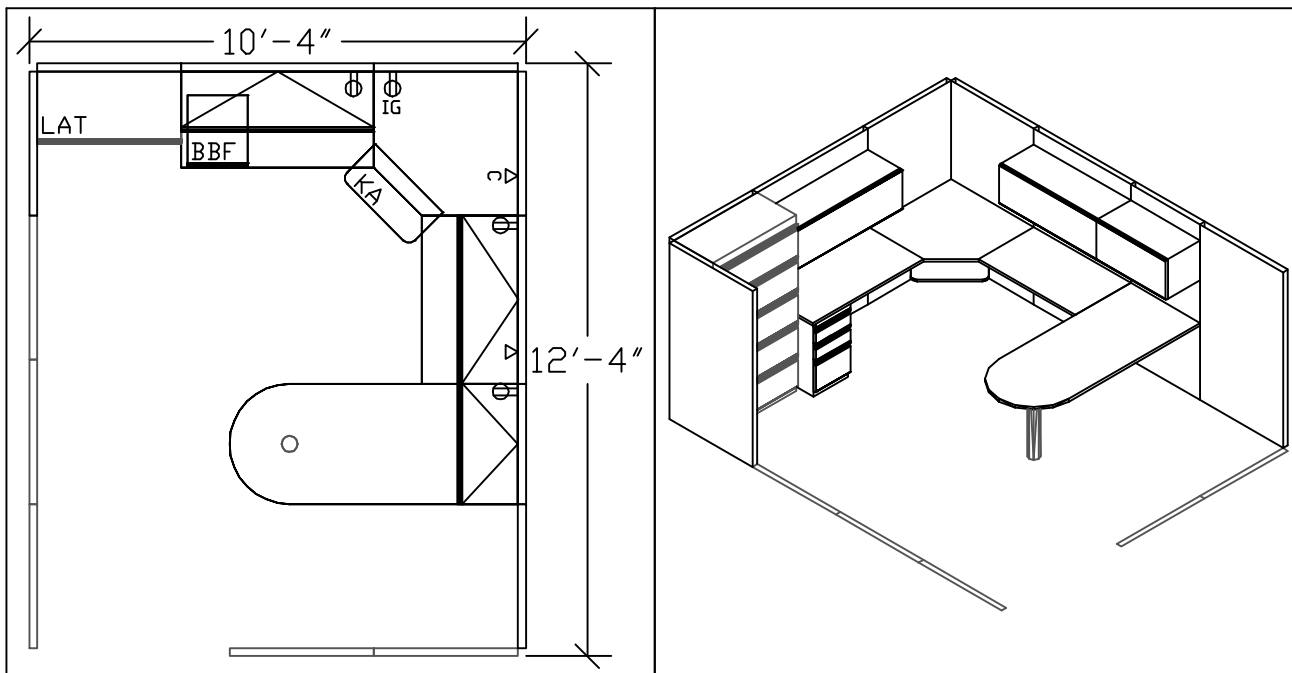| Component	Qty	Size
Panel	40 lin.ft.	64-68" high
Worksurface	2	24" x 48"
Worksurface	1	24" x 24"
Worksurface	1	24" x 54"
Worksurface	1	30" x 72" D-shape
Keyboard	1	
Cabinet	2	48"
Cabinet	1	24"
Pedestal, mobile	1	Box/Box/File
Pedestal, mobile	1	File/File
Lateral file	1	42", 2 drawer

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Workstation 14
Section Chief

SQ. FT. 128

SCALE: 1/4"=1'0"

Date: 04-03-1998

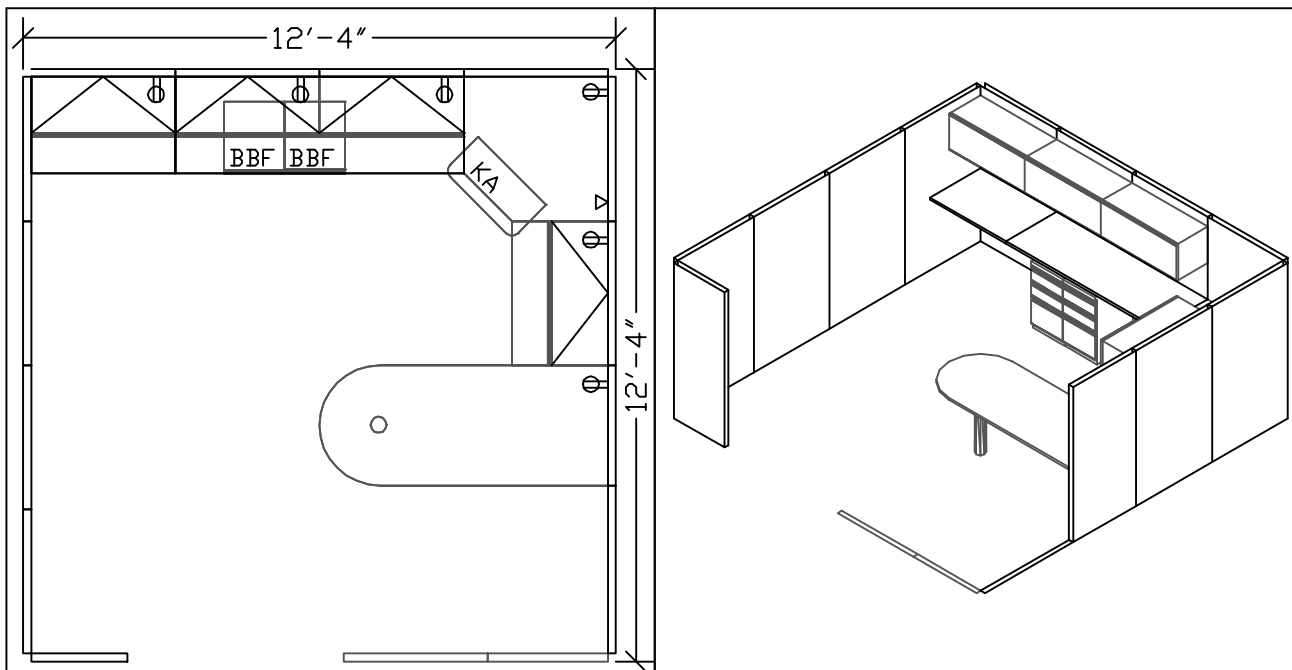| Component	Qty	Size
Panel	44 lin.ft.	80" high
Door	1	36"
Worksurface	2	24" x 48"
Worksurface	1	24" x 72"
Worksurface	1	36" x 72" D-shape
Pencil drawer	1	
Pedestal	1	Box/Box/File
Cabinet	4	48"
Cabinet	2	24"
Lateral file	1	36" 2-drawer

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Workstation 15
Section Chief

SQ. FT. 128
SCALE: 1/8"=1'0"

Date: 04-03-1998

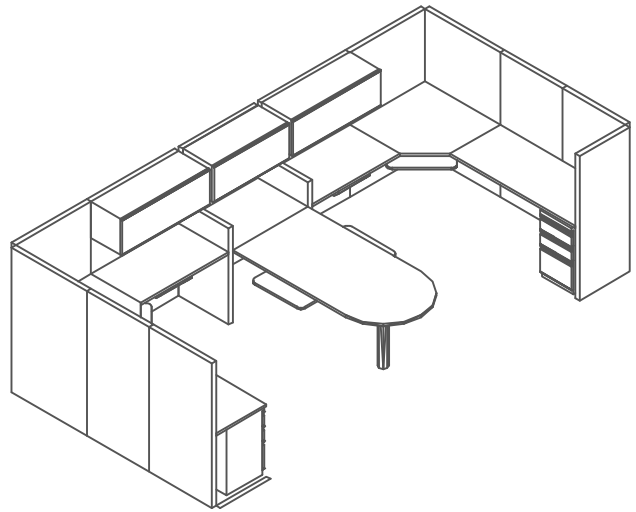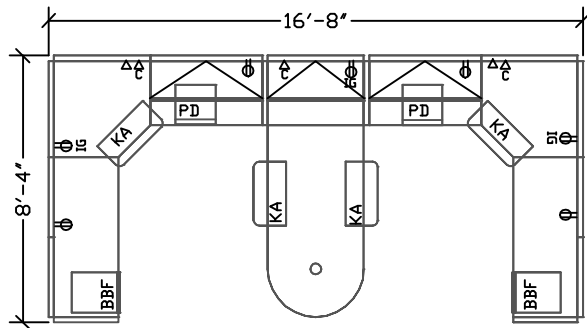| Component	Qty	Size
Panel	40 lin.ft.	64-68" high
Worksurface	1	24" x 48"
Worksurface	1	24" x 42"
Worksurface	1	36" Corner
Worksurface	1	30" x 72" D-shape
Keyboard	1	
Pedestal	1	Box/Box/File
Cabinet	1	48"
Cabinet	1	42"
Cabinet	1	30"
Lateral file	1	5 Drawer

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Workstation 16
Section Chief

SQ. FT. 128
SCALE: 1/4"=1'0"

Date: 04-03-1998

Component	Qty	Size
Panels	44 lin.ft.	64-68" high
Worksurface	2	24" x 36"
Worksurface	1	24" x 72"
Worksurface	1	36" corner
Worksurface	1	30" x 72" D-shape
Keyboard arm	1	
Cabinet	4	36"
Pedestal	2	Box/Box/File

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Workstation 17
Branch Chief

SQ. FT. 152
SCALE: 1/4"=1'0"

Date: 04-03-1998

16'-8"

8'-4"

Component	Qty	Size
Panels	36 lin.ft.	64-68" high
Panels	4 lin.ft.	42" high
Worksurface	2	24" x 60"
Worksurface	2	24" x 42"
Worksurface	1	24" x 36"
Worksurface	2	36" corner
Worksurface	1	36" x 72" D-shape
Keyboard arm	4	
Pencil drawer	2	
Cabinet	1	36"
Cabinet	2	42"
Pedestal, mobile	2	Box/Box/File

Workstation 18
Shared
workstation

SQ. FT. 138

SCALE:

Date: 04-03-1998

6'-6"

14'

BBF

BBF
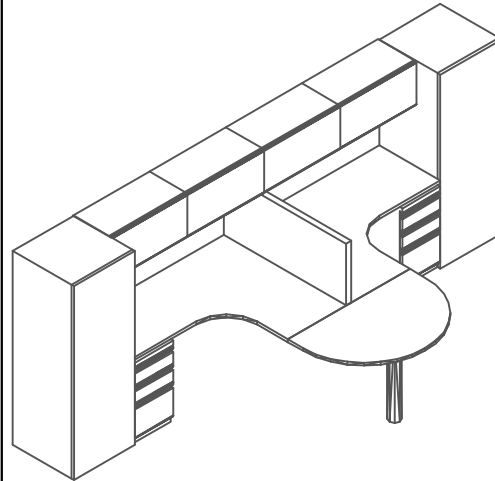
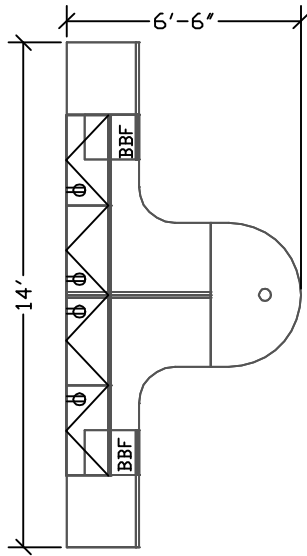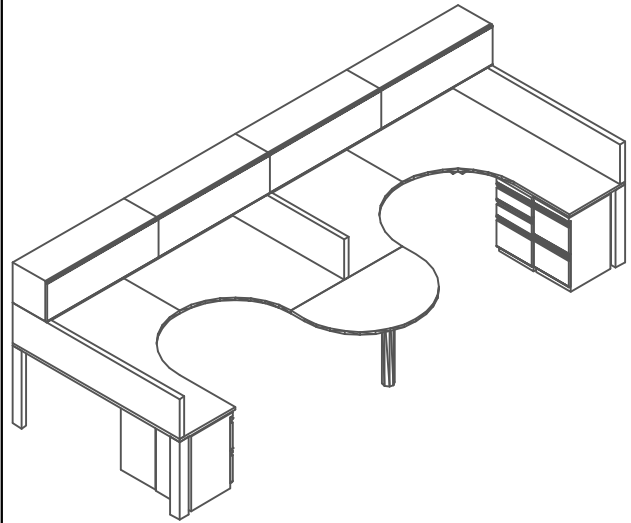| Component	Qty	Size
Privacy screen	1	48" x 15"
Storage cabinet	2	
Worksurface	2	48" x 60" Corner
Worksurface	1	48" x 30" Semiround
Cabinet	4	30"
Pedestal	2	Box/Box/File

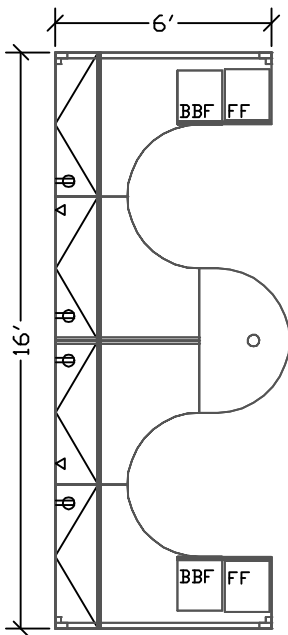National Furniture Center
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Workstation 19
Shared

SQ. FT. 91

SCALE:

Date:04-03-1998

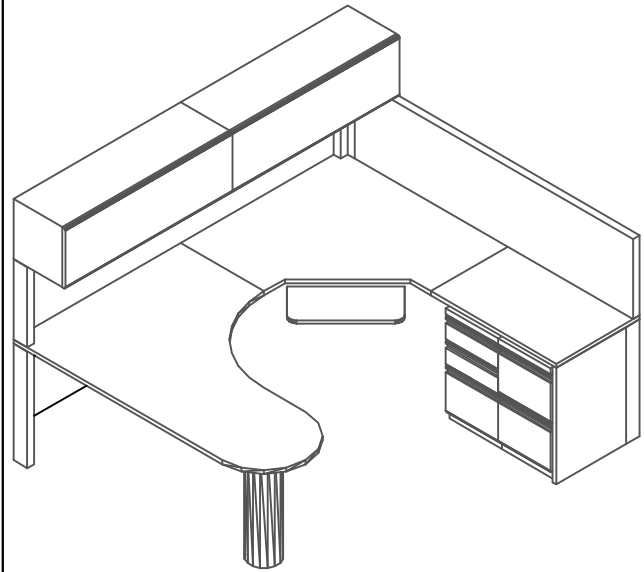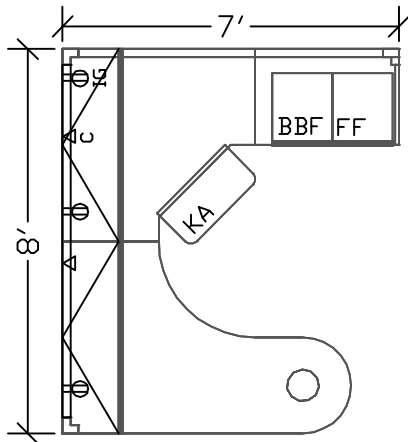| Component	Qty	Size
Worksurface	2	48" x 72" corner
Worksurface	2	48" corner
Worksurface	1	48" x 30" semiround
Cabinet	4	48"
Pedestal	2	Box/Box/File
Pedestal	2	File/File
Privacy screen	2	72" x 15"
Privacy screen	1	48" x 15"

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Workstation 20
Shared

SQ. FT. 96

SCALE:

Date: 04-03-1998

Component	Qty	Size
Worksurface	1	48" x 73" corner
Worksurface	1	48" corner
Worksurface	1	24" x 36"
Keyboard arm	1	
Cabinet	2	48"
Pedestal	1	Box/Box/File
Pedestal	1	File/File
Privacy screen	1	84" x 15"

Workstation 22
Professional

SQ. FT. 56

SCALE: 1/4"=1'0"

Date: 04-03-1998